

BELFAST BOROUGH.

RETURN to an Order of the Honourable The House of Commons,
dated 5 June 1867:—*file*,

COPIES " of MEMORIAL to the Lord Lieutenant from the Mayor and Corporation of *Belfast*, praying for the Appointment of a RECORDER for that Borough :"

" And, of PATENT granting a separate COURT of QUARTER SESSIONS and COURT of RECORD to the said Borough of *Belfast*."

The Town Clerk of Belfast to Lord Naas.

My Lord,

Town Hall, Belfast, 24 August 1866.

BY directions of the Town Council of this borough, I beg to enclose to your Lordship a Memorial to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, praying for the appointment of a Recorder for Belfast, &c.

I have, &c.

The Right Hon.

(signed)

James Guthrie, Town Clerk.

Lord Naas, Chief Secretary,
Castle, Dublin.

PETITION of the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough
of *Belfast*.

To His Excellency the Marquis of *Abercorn*, K. G., the Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland, and to the Right Honourable the Privy Council.

The Petition of the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Borough of
Belfast under their Corporate Seal,

Sheweth,

THAT the borough of Belfast is situate partly in the county of Antrim, and partly in county of Down; that the annual value of rateable property situate in the borough according to the last revised lists thereof, is 328,000 £, and, as your Petitioners believe, the population now amounts to 160,000.

That the borough of Belfast does not at present constitute a separate petty sessions district, but forms a part of a district which extends several miles beyond the limits of the borough, the petty sessions for which are held in Belfast.

That the building in which the petty sessions for the Belfast district have, for the last 15 years, been held, is a portion of the property of your Petitioners which, by the Belfast Award Act, 1864, they were directed to sell with the consent of the Lords of Her Majesty's Treasury, and the proceeds of which they are directed to apply to the reduction of the corporate debt.

That in the month of October last, your Petitioners did sell this property to Mr. Benjamin Dickson, for the sum of 9,050 £, and the Lords of the Treasury having been pleased to approve of such a sale, a conveyance was executed by your Petitioners, and by two of their Lordships, bearing date day of March last, and thereupon Mr. Dickson paid the amount of the said purchase money, which has been applied by your Petitioners as directed by the said Act.

That your Petitioners were advised that, as there was no other building within the borough to which the petty sessions could be transferred, the county court-house, which is situate in Belfast, was the proper place in which the said sessions should be held, but as the high sheriff of the county raised some difficulty as to the right of the magistrates to the use of the court-house, your Petitioners entered into a temporary arrangement with Mr. Dickson, to permit the magistrates to continue their sittings in the present building, and agreed to pay him a rent of 5 £ a week therefor.

That this arrangement may at any time be terminated upon a month's notice. That by the 157th section of the Irish Municipal Corporations Act, 3rd & 4th Vict. c. 108, it is provided that Her Majesty may from time to time assign, to so many persons as she shall think proper, Her Majesty's Commission to act as justices of the peace for the boroughs named in Schedule A, which includes the borough of Belfast; and by section 159, the Council of every borough to which a separate commission of the peace shall be so granted, shall be authorised and required to provide and furnish one or more fit or suitable office or offices, to be called the "Police Office", or offices of the borough, for the purpose of transacting the business of the justices, and to pay from time to time, out of the borough fund, such sums as may be necessary for providing, upholding, and furnishing, and for the necessary expenses of such police office or offices.

That there are at present two stipendiary magistrates stationed in Belfast who hold a daily court, and the cases which were brought before them in the year 1865 numbered 16,276.

That it is very important that the duties of the magistrates at petty sessions should be divided; that the borough should be constituted a separate petty sessions district, and that two courts should be daily held within the borough.

That your Petitioners are willing and anxious to provide two police offices, for the transacting of the business of the magistrates, under 159th section of the said Act, but they are advised that the said section does not apply to the borough of Belfast until Her Majesty has been pleased to grant a separate commission of the peace for the borough.

That there is a very large and increasing amount of civil business transacted at each quarter sessions in the town of Belfast, which, on an average, last about 12 or 14 days, and great inconvenience is caused to suitors by loss of time in attending at same.

That in cases arising in that portion of the borough situate in the county of Down, the parties are obliged to attend at Newtownards, which is situate seven miles from Belfast.

That by section 163 of the Municipal Corporations Act, it is provided that the Council of every borough which shall be desirous that a separate court of quarter sessions of the peace shall be holden for such borough, shall signify same to the Lord Lieutenant and Privy Council, setting forth the grounds of the application, and the salary which they are willing to pay to the Recorder in that behalf, and that Her Majesty may, if she shall be pleased, thereupon grant that such separate court of quarter sessions shall thenceforward be holden for such borough, and the Lord Lieutenant may appoint a Recorder, and may direct that an annual salary, not exceeding the sum stated in such petition, shall be paid to such Recorder out of the borough fund. And, by section 168, such Recorder shall hold a court of quarter sessions of the peace in and for such borough once in every quarter of a year, or by adjournment or otherwise, at such other and more frequent times as the said Recorder may, in his discretion, think fit, or as the Lord Lieutenant shall from time to time think fit to direct.

That should it please Her Majesty to grant a separate court of quarter sessions for the borough of Belfast, and should your Excellency be pleased to appoint a Recorder of the borough of Belfast, and to hold more frequent courts therein (which in the opinion of your Petitioners should at least be 10) for the trial of civil actions, your Memorialists are willing to pay, out of the borough fund, a salary of 500 £ a-year to such Recorder; and your Petitioners suggest to your Excellency that the appointment of the present Chairman of the county of Antrim to be Recorder of the borough, would give universal satisfaction to the inhabitants.

Your Petitioners, therefore, pray that Her Majesty may be pleased to assign to so many persons as she shall think proper, Her Majesty's Commission to act

as justices of the peace, in and for the borough of Belfast, and that Her Majesty may also be pleased to grant a separate court of quarter sessions to be holden for the said borough; your Petitioners being ready and willing to pay such Recorder as your Excellency may appoint, such annual salary, not exceeding 500 l. a year, as your Excellency in that behalf may direct.

(signed) *W. Mullan, Mayor.*
James Guthrie, Town Clerk.



COPY of PATENT granting a Separate Court of Quarter Sessions and Court of Record to the Borough of Belfast.

VICTORIA, by the Grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen Defender of the Faith, and so forth. To all unto whom these presents shall come, greeting; Whereas a Charter of Incorporation hath been heretofore granted and conferred by Our Royal predecessor to the Sovereign free burgesses and commonalty of the borough of Belfast: And whereas under the provisions of an Act passed in the Session of Parliament holden in the third and fourth years of our reign, intituled "An Act for the Regulation of Municipal Corporations in Ireland," the constitution of the body corporate of the said borough of Belfast hath been altered, and the said body corporate bears the name of the mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of the borough of Belfast, who now constitute the Town Council of the said borough, which hath been under the said Act duly elected: And whereas the said Act, so far as relates to the said borough of Belfast and the boundaries thereof, has been since amended, and particularly under the provisions of an Act of Parliament passed in the Session holden in the sixteenth and seventeenth years of Our reign, intituled "The Belfast Borough Extension Act, One thousand eight hundred and fifty-three:" And whereas the said mayor, aldermen, and burgesses of the said borough of Belfast being desirous that a separate court of quarter sessions of the peace, comprising a court for the trial of civil actions, should be holden in and for the said borough, have presented their humble petition under their corporate seal, to Our Lieutenant General and General Governor of that part of our United Kingdom, called Ireland, and to Our Privy Council in Ireland, and therein set forth, that the said borough of Belfast is situate partly in the county of Antrim, and partly in the county of Down, and that the annual value of rateable property situate in the said borough, according to the last revised lists thereof, is Three hundred and twenty-eight thousand pounds, and that the population amounts to One hundred and sixty thousand; and also set forth that the said borough does not at present constitute a separate petty sessions district, and stated a certain arrangement therein-mentioned for the holding of petty sessions, and other matters relative to the granting of a separate commission of the peace for the said borough; and also set forth that there is a very large and increasing amount of civil business transacted at each quarter sessions in the town of Belfast, which on an average last about twelve or fourteen days, and that great inconvenience is caused to suitors by loss of time in attending at same, and that in cases arising in that portion of the borough situate in the county of Down, the parties are obliged to attend at Newtownwards, which is situate seven miles from the said town of Belfast; and after stating the one hundred and sixty-third section of the said Act for the regulation of municipal corporations in Ireland, also set forth that should it be Our will and pleasure to grant a separate court of quarter sessions for the said borough of Belfast, and should Our Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland be pleased to appoint a Recorder of the said borough of Belfast, and to hold more frequent courts therein (which the said Petitioners stated, in their opinion, should be at least ten), for the trial of civil actions, the said Petitioners are willing to pay out of the borough fund a salary of Five hundred pounds a year to such Recorder; and the said Petitioners thereby prayed that we might be

pleased to assign to so many persons as we should think proper Our commission to act as justices of the peace in and for the said borough of Belfast, and also that we might be pleased to grant a separate court of quarter sessions to be holden for the said borough, the said Petitioners being ready and willing to pay such Recorder as our Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland might appoint, such annual salary, not exceeding Five hundred pounds a year, as our said Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor in that behalf might direct: And whereas Our right trusty and well beloved cousin and councillor, James Marquis of Abercorn, Our Lord Lieutenant General and General Governor of that part of our said United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, called Ireland, having represented unto us that Our said Lord Lieutenant and Our Privy Council in Ireland having examined the ground set forth in the said petition, recommended that it would be for the ease and benefit of Our loyal subjects in said borough of Belfast that the same should be complied with, and that we should grant that a separate court of quarter sessions of the peace, comprising a court of record for the trial of civil actions, should henceforward be holden in and for said borough; We, taking the matter into Our consideration have been graciously pleased to condescend thereto: Know ye, therefore, that we of our special grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, by and with the advice and consent of our right trusty and entirely beloved cousin and councillor, James Marquis of Abercorn, K.G., Our Lieutenant General and General Governor of that part of Our said United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, called Ireland, and according to the tenor and effect of Our letter under Our privy signet and Royal sign manual, bearing date at Our Court at Saint James's, the Twenty-sixth day of November, One thousand eight hundred and sixty-six, in the thirtieth year of Our reign, and now enrolled in the rolls of Our High Court of Chancery, in that part of Our said United Kingdom called Ireland, have granted, and by these presents for us, Our heirs and successors, we do grant, Our commission of the peace to the said borough of Belfast: And we do further grant a separate court of quarter sessions of the peace comprising a court of record for the trial of civil actions, with all the rights, powers, incidents, and jurisdictions thereunto belonging, to be and continue to be holden in and for the said borough of Belfast, and to be held at Belfast, in that part of Our said United Kingdom called Ireland: And further of Our like special grace, certain knowledge, and mere motion, by and with the advice and consent aforesaid, and according to the tenor of Our aforesaid letter, we have granted, and by these presents we do grant, that the said separate court of quarter sessions of the peace, comprising a court of record for the trial of civil actions, with all the rights, powers, incidents, and jurisdictions thereunto belonging, shall be henceforward held at Belfast, in and for the borough of Belfast aforesaid: And Our further will and pleasure is, that these our letters patent, or the enrolment hereof, shall be in all things firm, valid, and effectual in the law, without any further grant from us, Our heirs or successors, to be had, procured, or obtained: Provided always, that these Our letters patent be enrolled in the rolls of Our High Court of Chancery, in that part of Our said United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, called Ireland, within the space of six calendar months next ensuing the date of these presents. In witness whereof, we have caused these our letters to be made patent.

Witness, James Marquis of Abercorn, Our Lieutenant General and General Governor of Ireland, at Dublin, the seventeenth day of December, in the thirtieth year of Our reign.

BELFAST BOROUGH.

COPIES of MEMORIAL from the Mayor and Corporation of *Belfast* to the Lord Lieutenant, praying for the Appointment of a RECORDER for that Borough; and, of PATENT granting a separate COURT of QUARTER SESSIONS and COURT of RECORD to the said Borough of *Belfast*.

(*Lord Naas.*)

Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,
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